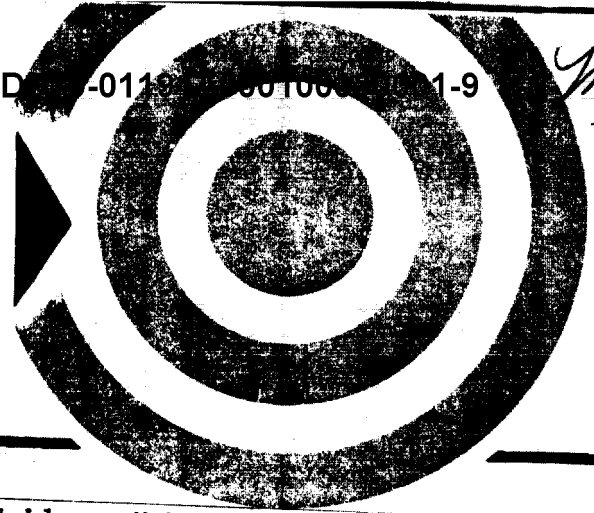


FEATURES



"The Abuse of Psychiatry in the USSR; The Evidence," by Clayton Yeo and "My Five Years in Mental Hospitals," by Victor Feinberg, Index on Censorship, Summer 1975.

"The Soviet Union's Hospitals of Fear," by Valerie Kaye and "Will British Psychiatrists Take Action Against the Torturers of the Soviet Union?," by Bernard Levin, London Times, 27 June and 3 July 1975.

"Russia Asked to Free Rebel Psychiatrist," by Clare Dover, The Daily Telegraph, 10 July 1975.

These articles are supplied as one means of keeping international attention focused on the subject of psychiatric abuse in the USSR. It is suggested they be replayed or utilized in locally appropriate ways throughout the summer and early fall in connection with the first anniversary (30 October) of the event Andrey Sakharov has styled the "Day of Political Prisoners," which we also plan to exploit. As the Levin article indicates, the Royal College of Psychiatrists in Great Britain will be meeting in October. This organization is most active in exposing the USSR's use of psychiatry for political purposes and its activities may provide the foundation, or momentum, for additional covert action efforts.

We plan subsequent exploitation of media coverage of this subject as October approaches, depending on the amount and quality of material available. To this end we request your cooperation in sending articles we might otherwise miss.

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17 July 1975

CPYRGHT

The abuse of psychiatry in the USSR

Introduction

'Your disease is dissent,' Victor Fainberg was told by a doctor in a Leningrad mental hospital in 1971. The doctor, whose words are quoted in full in the article below, made no secret of the fact that Fainberg had been confined there on account of his political opinions and that his release hinged on his rejection of those opinions and the adoption of 'the correct point of view'.

Yet the Soviet authorities are constantly striving to convince the world that those who are confined in such hospitals are all suffering from genuine mental illnesses and that there is thus no need for concern at the fate of people like Vladimir

Bukovsky, Leonid Plyushch and Semyon Gluzman.

Taking several of the better-known cases, Clayton Yeo examines this argument in a carefully documented article; this is followed by the text of an interview given to INDEX on Censorship by one of the 'beneficiaries' of Soviet psychiatric practices, Victor Fainberg, on his recent visit to London. A native of Leningrad, Fainberg was arrested in Moscow's Red Square on 24 August 1968 during a demonstration in protest at the invasion of Czechoslovakia and spent five years in mental hospitals before being allowed to emigrate to Israel in June 1974.

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Clayton Yeo: The evidence

In August 1973 Dr A. V. Snezhnevsky, a member of the USSR Academy of Sciences and a leading psychiatrist at Moscow's Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry, was called upon to put paid to claims that Soviet psychiatry has been abused for political purposes. Dr Snezhnevsky said that 'in fifty years of work in the Soviet public health service he knew of no case in which a healthy man was put in a psychiatric hospital'.¹

If it were true, this statement would make Soviet psychiatric practice the envy of those throughout the world who are concerned for the preservation of individuals' rights. Psychiatrists and jurists in many countries have recognised that in cases of confinement of persons to mental hospitals against their will there are real dangers that the intolerance or ignorance of those in authority

may take precedence over the need of the patient for treatment or the need of society for protection. It is widely realised that these dangers must be countered by continuous improvement of psychiatric service and even more so by development in law of powerful procedural rights for all persons deprived of the right to judge for themselves the propriety of their own behaviour.

Few psychiatrists could claim, like Dr Snezhnevsky, that they know of no case during half a century in their country where sane persons have been forcibly committed to psychiatric hospitals. Equally few would accept his claim at face value, especially in view of strong documentary evidence which has in recent years emerged from the Soviet Union indicating systematic abuse of psychiatry in that country. However, what is most disconcerting about Dr Snezhnevsky's statement is that, speaking with official authority, he implicitly and

¹ *Izvestiya*, 31 August 1973

unequivocally rejected any effort to develop stronger barriers against injustices upon those whose place in society is challenged on psychiatric grounds. Even the most cursory acquaintance with Soviet law makes plain the weakness of institutional guarantees against abuse of psychiatry.

In most cases known to us of individuals being forcibly confined to psychiatric hospitals on account of their political views, the procedure used is that provided by Soviet criminal law.² Soviet criminal legislation stipulates that if officials investigating a criminal case question the mental health of the accused, they must request a psychiatric diagnosis of him by a commission of experts. If this commission declares that the accused is suffering from mental illness, or was mentally incapacitated at the time of his alleged commission of the crime, criminal charges must be dropped and the diagnosis presented to a court, which then decides whether the person is to be confined for 'compulsory measures of a medical character'.

As Alexander Yesenin-Vol'pin has shown in a remarkable 'Expert Opinion' written for the Moscow Human Rights Committee, the accused is deprived of even the limited procedural rights established by Soviet law in criminal cases.³ He need not be told that an order calling for his psychiatric examination has been made, nor need he be informed of the results of the examination. Once the accused's sanity has been called into question, the investigators are not required to inform him of new charges against him or to familiarise him with any documentation of the case. It is left to the court's discretion whether the accused or his relatives shall be allowed to attend the court hearing which rules upon his sanity and his need for confinement to a psychiatric hospital. There is no legal requirement that the accused be informed of the date of this hearing, despite its decisive influence on his fate. In many republics of the USSR the hearing need not be open to the public. Thus in the huge Russian republic, for example, there is no need for officials to provide a smoke-screen for the closed nature of such hearings, as they must do in political cases where no formal issue is made of the sanity of the accused.

The authors of the present Soviet criminal laws no doubt justified the absence of stringent procedural guarantees by the expectation that justice and the rights of purportedly mentally ill accused persons would be protected at two decisive instances: the psychiatrists' formulation of their diagnosis and the final judgement of the court.

² The most graphic account of abuses of the civil procedure for compulsory confinement for psychiatric purposes is that by Zhores and Roy Medvedev, *A Question of Madness* (Penguin, London, 1971).
³ 'Mneniye Eksperta Komiteta Prav Cheloveka A. S. Vol'pina', in *Proceedings of the Moscow Human Rights Committee* (The International League for the Rights of Man, New York, 1972).

This is the kind of buck-passing which has opened the way for various kinds of abuses in many countries. However, in the USSR the direct infusion of political criteria and pressures into the work of psychiatrists and courts dealing with politically sensitive cases makes for systematic and deliberate confinement of healthy citizens to psychiatric hospitals.

Borisov and Shimanov

Soviet psychiatrists are bound by their professional ethic to be guided strictly by medical considerations in all of their work. Yet a number of them have succumbed to direct or indirect political pressures to shut troublesome dissenters into psychiatric hospitals, and have clearly recorded this abuse of their position in psychiatric diagnoses which, through the efforts of men like Vladimir Bukovsky, have reached the West. A study of such diagnoses reveals a variety of attitudes on the part of the psychiatrists who have written them. On occasions psychiatrists have confided to political 'patients' that they clearly recognise the lack of medical justification for their forced confinement. For example, when the wife of Vladimir Borisov protested that he was confined to a Leningrad psychiatric hospital because of his opinions, a psychiatrist replied: '... he is unlucky; he is down on our register. What may be a symptom of opinions in a normal person is a sign of illness in your husband'.⁴ On the other hand, in many cases psychiatrists have shown clearly that their own narrow world-view makes them ready to characterise refusal to conform to official norms of behaviour as a symptom of mental illness. A certain Dr Shafran told the Orthodox Christian 'patient' Gennady Shimanov in 1969:

You see, Gennady Mikhailovich. ... Everything that you just told us confirms us in the view that illness lies at the root of your 'conversion'. Of course you yourself cannot understand this; but you must have confidence in us: we are specialists. If you had grown up in a religious family or had lived somewhere in the West, well, then we could have looked at your religiousness in another way. ... But you were educated in a Soviet school, and were brought up in a family of non-believers. ... You are an educated person, I am ready even to admit that you know more about philosophy and religion than I do. ... And suddenly ... wham! ... you're religious! ... It's very odd indeed ... and makes one wonder if some abnormal process were not already developing in you in your youth, which later on brought you to religion.⁵

⁴ *Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Repression in the Soviet Union* (US Government Printing Office, Washington, 1972), p.148.

⁵ G. M. Shimanov, 'Notes From the Red House', in *Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Repression in the Soviet Union*, p.213.

In those psychiatric diagnoses of political dissidents which are available to us, a great deal of attention is invariably devoted to the political records of the subjects of psychiatric investigation. As Roy Medvedev told the Moscow Human Rights Committee:

In the conclusions of several psychiatric 'special expert diagnoses' it is possible to find such 'symptoms' of 'psychiatric illness': 'an obsessive mania for truth-seeking', 'wears a beard', 'meticulousness of thought and insufficiently critical attitude toward the existing situation', 'considers the entry of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia to have been aggression', ... 'thinks that he must devote his life to the ideal of communism'.⁶

Whatever the motivations of the psychiatrists involved, such diagnoses usually do not disguise acceptance of the security organs' viewpoint that political dissidence can reasonably be explained in terms of mental disturbance. Efforts to seek reform of Soviet institutions are recorded as 'reformist delusions', while an individual's refusal to recant goes into the diagnosis as 'absence of a critical attitude to his situation'.

Bidya Dandaron

Diagnoses submitted by psychiatrists to the courts are frequently outlandish in their efforts to prove the presence of mental illness in political dissidents. For example, in 1972 a number of persons were arrested in Siberia for organising a Buddhist sect. The most prominent of the group, Bidya Dandaron, was sentenced to a long term in a prison camp where he has since died.⁷ His four co-defendants (Yu. K. Lavrov, A. Zheleznov, D. Butkus and V. M. Montlevich) were all submitted to psychiatric diagnosis, declared mentally ill and consigned by court order to psychiatric hospital.⁸ This was not the result of some new Soviet contribution to human knowledge of group hysteria, but a practical device in the face of lack of evidence suitable for use in court. A similar example of collective hospitalisation occurred in 1971, when a psychiatric commission recommended that four persons from a group of seven Leningrad Communists arrested for propagating dissident Marxism be confined to a special psychiatric hospital.⁹

Grigorenko and Yakhimovich

The psychiatric diagnoses of General Pyotr Grigorenko and Ivan Yakhimovich, two prominent dissident Marxist-Leninists, reveal with particular

clarity the difficulty often encountered by psychiatrists in disguising the political motivation for their conclusions. In 1969, after a Tashkent psychiatric commission had examined Grigorenko and declared him to be mentally healthy, the Serbsky Institute of Forensic Psychiatry in Moscow was asked for a second opinion. This second diagnosis found in Grigorenko's political activity clear signs of 'pathological (paranoid) development of the personality'. In recommending that Grigorenko be confined to a 'special' (i.e. prison) psychiatric hospital, the Serbsky Institute's experts noted the deficiencies in the way the Tashkent commission had come to its opposite conclusion:

The commission cannot agree with the outpatient forensic psychiatric diagnosis formulated in Tashkent since it has noted the presence in Grigorenko of pathological changes in his psyche recorded in the present report which could not be revealed in the conditions of an out-patient examination because of his outwardly well-adjusted behaviour, his formally coherent utterances and his retention of his past knowledge and manners - all of which is characteristic of a pathological development of the personality.¹⁰

In June 1969 a psychiatric commission in Riga examined Ivan Yakhimovich, a Communist who had earned high official praise as a collective farm chairman until, in 1968, 'he began spreading slanderous and defamatory statements blaming the Soviet Government and social system'. The psychiatrists could discover nothing abnormal in Yakhimovich's record of behaviour apart from his political activity. The commission's remarks included the following:

Patient is completely oriented. . . . The patient has an excellent knowledge of literature, of classics of Marxism and Leninism, and also has an excellent knowledge of works of many philosophers and political figures. . . . During the interview with the psychiatrist, patient was polite, gentle, and showed no evidence of delusions and hallucinations, and displayed adequate memory.¹¹

The commission's conclusion and recommendations were something of a *non sequitur*:

On the basis of the above findings, the commission reaches the conclusion that Yakhimovich shows development of a paranoid system in a psychopathic personality. . . . The patient is in need of compulsory treatment in the hospital of special regimen.¹²

The psychiatric commission having made its diagnosis and recommendation, it is up to the court to decide what action is to be taken. Soviet courts are legally required to operate independently of any outside institutional interests, and Soviet judges are constitutionally 'independent and subject only to the law'. The courts no doubt do act autonomously in deciding most cases under cri-

⁶ R. A. Medvedev, 'O Prinuditel'nykh Psikhia-tricheskikh Gositalizatsiyakh Po Politicheskoy Motivatsii', in *Proceedings of the Moscow Human Rights Committee*, p.131.

⁷ cf. INDEX Index 1/1975, pp.92-93.

⁸ *Khronika Tekushcheykh Sobitiy* (Khronika Press: New York), No.28, pp.14-18.

⁹ *A Chronicle of Current Events* (Amnesty International Publications, London), No.26, pp.229-230; cf. Anthony de Meeus, *Livre Blanc sur l'internement psychiatrique de dissidents sains d'esprit* (JURSS (Comité International pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme en URSS, Brussels, 1974), p.16.

¹⁰ 'Report No.59/5: An In-Patient Forensic Diagnosis of P. G. Grigorenko', in *Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Repression in the Soviet Union*, p.70.

¹¹ 'Official Psychiatric Diagnoses - I. A. Yakhimovich: Report No.96', in *Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Repression in the Soviet Union*, p.172.

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minial law. However, when the case before it has political aspects, the Soviet court reverts to the political role created for it in Stalinist times. That this is so is made plain by the fact that no case brought before a Soviet court under the articles proscribing 'anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda' and 'anti-Soviet slander' has ever brought a not-guilty verdict, and by the fact that no appeal court has reversed a guilty verdict against a political defendant.

Leonid Plyushch

Persons accused of 'anti-Soviet' activities and found mentally ill by a psychiatric commission do not fare any better in court. In no such case known to us has a Soviet court decided in favour of the defendant on the grounds that his constitutional or procedural rights had been violated. Although the defendant (or, since he is likely not to appear in court, his advocate) may legally demand a second psychiatric opinion; this request is almost never granted. In those republics where an open hearing of psychiatric cases is required by law, the courts frequently comply with KGB demands that only a selected public is admitted. In the case of Leonid Plyushch, the brilliant Ukrainian cyberneticist currently being 'treated' in Dnepropetrovsk special psychiatric hospital, Judge Dyshel ruled that the court hearing on Plyushch's state of mind was a 'state secret' and could therefore be held *in camera*.¹³ The most obvious manifestation of the courts' submission to political pressures lies in the fact that they accept as decisive evidence such reprehensible psychiatric documents as those we have cited.

If, as normally happens, the court accepts the psychiatric commission's diagnosis and recommendations, it then releases the defendant from criminal responsibility or punishment and orders that he be submitted for medical treatment. The court can send the 'patient' either to an 'ordinary' or a 'special' psychiatric hospital for an indefinite period. According to a 1966 textbook on Soviet criminal law, 'ordinary' psychiatric hospitals are intended for persons who have committed 'not especially serious' actions, while the 'special' institutions are designed for persons who 'represent a special danger to society'.¹⁴ The same source used as its example of a person sent by court to an 'ordinary' psychiatric hospital a certain 'B', a Leningrad woman

who during an argument with her neighbour slashed her in the face with a large table knife and, after dislodging several teeth, inflicted less serious wounds to her body.¹⁵

¹³ T. Khodorovich, *Istoriya Bolyezni Leonida Plyushcha* (The Alexander Herzen Foundation, Amsterdam, 1974), p.87.

¹⁴ *Ugolovnoye Pravo: Chast' Obshchaya* (Moscow, 1966), p.448.

¹⁵ *ibid.*

Soviet courts normally have sent 'mentally ill' dissidents to 'special' psychiatric hospitals, which are under the control of the MVD (Ministry of Internal Affairs) and where security is militarised.

There is no legal code regulating the operation of psychiatric hospitals such as there is for regular prison institutions. This fact has special significance in evaluating the legal status of patients. Inmates of prisons and labour camps are legally guaranteed retention of citizens' rights (albeit with significant limitations).¹⁶ While in practice their rights are widely abused, they have a legal right to protest violations of prison regulations and to bring them to the attention of legal supervisory organs. In other words, they are at least formally recognised as subjects of the law.

Inmates of psychiatric hospitals lack even this formal protection, since the operations of such institutions are regulated not by legal codes but by secret ministerial instructions. They may write letters only at the discretion of their doctors, and then usually only to relatives. They are not allowed to write letters of protest to the Procuracy, the toothless watchdog of socialist legality, although this right is formally guaranteed to all Soviet citizens. In their outward correspondence 'patients' may make no reference to their treatment or conditions of confinement. This censorship occasionally has its disadvantages for the authorities. Partly because he could not refer to events and conditions in the Dnepropetrovsk special psychiatric hospital, Leonid Plyushch concentrates in his letters on his philosophical and scholarly interests and on his family relations. In so doing, he has given proof of his brilliant mind and warm, honest character. These letters provide greater condemnation of his persecutors than any description of their actions could have done.¹⁷

Inmates of psychiatric hospitals and their relatives have no say in the selection of the psychiatrist in charge of their case, nor can they question his decisions as to treatment or even see the psychiatric reports on which these decisions are based. This opens the way for the most arbitrary and dangerous practices. Whether impelled by official decision to suppress troublesome individuals by medical means or anxious to apply their own pet theories of diagnosis and treatment, doctors have without medical justification inflicted on many inmates courses of injections with such drugs as aminazin, sulfazin, triflazin, haloperidol and insulin, often with disastrous results for 'patients' not genuinely suffering from the condition for the treatment of which the drugs are intended. Leonid Plyushch, after being injected for

¹⁶ *Fundamentals of Corrective Labour Legislation of the USSR and the Union Republics* (Moscow, 1970), Article 8.

¹⁷ Many of Plyushch's letters, together with comprehensive documentation of his case, have been published in T. Khodorovich, *Istoriya Bolyezni Leonida Plyushcha*. (See book review on p.99.)

months with, alternatively or in series, insulin, haloperidol and triflazine, lost his capacity to read or write letters, and developed massive oedemic swelling and a heart condition.

Fainberg and Chernishev

Because the courts, either criminal or civil, do not specify the length of confinement for compulsory treatment, inmates of Soviet psychiatric hospitals are at the disposal of the psychiatrists and administrators for an indefinite period. According to the ministerial instructions, every six months a commission of psychiatrists (with the optional attendance of legal officials) re-examines each patient's case and recommends either continuation of treatment or release. When examining an inmate with a political record, the examining psychiatrists pay particular attention to developments in his political attitude. The inmate's refusal to recant 'anti-Soviet opinions' and his efforts to resist harmful forms of treatment or to protest against his confinement to the psychiatric hospital are recorded as symptoms of the persistence of a mental illness. A doctor in the Arsenal'naya special psychiatric hospital in Leningrad told Victor Fainberg in 1971:

Your discharge depends on your conduct. By your conduct we mean your opinions precisely on political questions. Your disease is dissent. As soon as you renounce your opinions and adopt the correct point of view, we'll let you out.¹⁸

For Victor Fainberg this demand was as repugnant as it is to most human rights activists in the USSR, who knowingly risk imprisonment for convictions which have been formed in the face of the immense official agitation and propaganda campaign to which all Soviet citizens are continuously exposed. Fainberg refused to submit, and it was by a series of hunger strikes and even suicide threats, coupled with foreign publicity, that he was able to obtain his release in 1974. Others have been even less fortunate. According to Vassily Chernishev's 1971 statement on his own period of confinement to a psychiatric hospital, Nikolai Broslavsky had spent 25 years in such confinement because of his refusal to compromise his religious convictions.¹⁹

Bukovsky and Gluzman

Recently Vladimir Bukovsky and Semyon Gluzman, two men sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for their efforts to help victims of psychiatric persecution, have advised persons threatened with confinement to psychiatric hospital to play by the KGB's rules:

It is fatal to emphasise the moral qualities of the dissidents: truthfulness, honour and sympathy, because that would mean to give truthful responses which harm oneself and provide the psychiatrist with the symptoms he needs.²⁰

¹⁸ *A Chronicle of Current Events*, No.19, p.179.

¹⁹ 'The Case of Vassily I. Chernishev', *Abuse of Psychiatry for Political Repression in the Soviet Union*, p.227.

²⁰ Quoted in *Frankfurter Rundschau*, 19 December 1972.

Bukovsky and Gluzman recommend that the political dissident tell the psychiatrists that his political activities were due to ignorance of the possible consequences and by desire for fame. If he is nonetheless cast into psychiatric hospital, he must use 'every possible tactical trick' to convince the psychiatrists that he has changed his political views.²¹

In the past year there have been some tenuous indications that the practice of incarcerating political activists in psychiatric hospitals has been modified. Many of the better known victims have been released altogether, and others have been transferred from 'special' to 'ordinary' institutions.

While any change for the better must be acknowledged, there is little ground for optimism on this subject. Abuses of psychiatry have been perpetrated on a large scale for several decades, as a CPSU Central Committee special commission reported as early as 1956.²² We know the names of only a handful of the victims of this practice, whose total number has been estimated to be in the thousands.²³

The putative recent policy change has not saved all or even the best-known political figures. (Leonid Plyushch and Zinoviy Krasivsky, for example, still languish in the Dnepropetrovsk 'special' psychiatric hospital.) For unpublicised political victims, and for ordinary citizens incarcerated through psychiatric or judicial errors, there has been no change. Nor can real improvement be expected without changes not merely of policy but of the institutionalised relationships between psychiatry and the law.

It may be too much to hope that in the near future the political impulses which have brought about the most notorious abuses of Soviet psychiatry will be stopped. However, a big step in the direction of greater guarantees for the rights of all Soviet citizens would be made by the removal of those features of Soviet legislation which have made it possible to perpetrate such abuses without even formally violating the law. □

(The subject of this article and related themes are further developed in Amnesty International's forthcoming report on political imprisonment in the USSR.)

²¹ *ibid.*

²² S. P. Pisarev, letter to the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences (20 April, 1970). The full text of this letter is reproduced in *Survey*, No.77, Autumn 1970. According to Pisarev, a CPSU member on whose initiative the commission was created, the commission's findings were suppressed.

²³ Dr Norman Hirt, a Canadian psychiatrist who has been researching this problem for a number of years, has arrived at the figure of 'around seven or eight thousand "political patients"'. cf. *Livre Blanc*, p.64. This seems to be a pessimistically high figure, unless Dr Hirt's estimate embraces all persons in this category over the past several decades.

Victor Fainberg

My five years in mental hospitals

CPYRGHT

After the invasion of Czechoslovakia the members of the Human Rights Movement felt that this was the end. I went to Moscow and took part in the demonstration of 24 August to show people that the fight was not lost but was continuing. We also felt guilty at what had happened in Prague and, as a Soviet citizen, I wanted to do something in support of the Czech cause, as we were very grateful to the people of Czechoslovakia for their example, for their unprecedented peaceful victory in the battle against totalitarianism.

The demonstration lasted only five minutes – in effect, three of us each got one year for every minute of the demo. We were attacked and beaten by the KGB agents in Red Square. My shirt was bloodied and my teeth broken, and I was taken to the KGB 'isolator', the investigation prison of Lefortovo, where I stayed a month. During my interrogation I refused to give evidence against my friends and was then transferred to the Serbsky Institute, where I spent another month. I went before a commission which decided that I was ill and recommended my confinement in a mental hospital. I was therefore sent back to Lefortovo, to await the necessary court procedure, which of course took place in my absence. After the court had sentenced me, I remained in Lefortovo until 31 January 1968, waiting for a vacancy at the Leningrad Special Prison Hospital, where I then remained until 12 March 1973. On that day I was transferred to the Fifth Civil Mental Hospital in Leningrad. I was released on 11 November, but re-arrested on 30 April 1974 and thrown into the Third Civil Mental Hospital before being finally released on 11 May. Those eleven days were a last greeting from the KGB and Soviet psychiatry before I left the country. It is interesting that in those last eleven days of imprisonment, almost everything that had happened during my five years in mental prison hospitals was repeated over again. But I only want to relate what I consider the most important things I saw in the mental hospitals.

Brutal treatment

In the Leningrad Special Prison Hospital – where Bukovsky, Grigorenko and Yesenin-Volpin had been imprisoned before me – I found an absolutely arbitrary regime in force, even more severe than that which prevails in the ordinary prison hospitals for common criminals. It is, in fact, just like an ordinary prison, with cells and galleries,

peepholes in the doors, with warders and trustees. Apart from the prison officers, headed by a Colonel Oblinov, there were also the so-called male nurses – criminals serving terms for hooliganism, theft, embezzlement and so forth, who were afforded a great deal of scope for their activities among the madmen. These 'nurses' robbed the inmates of their food, not only from the parcels sent by their families but also from their daily diet, so that the prisoners would, for instance, receive milk diluted with water, more water than milk. The warders and nurses humiliated and beat the sick men in their care, and they – the warders, that is, not the madmen – were protected by the medical personnel, by the nursing sisters and doctors. If a doctor still retained something of a conscience and could not bear to see this kind of treatment being meted out, he couldn't do anything about it because, if he had, he would himself have been in trouble, risking dismissal from the hospital. And so even the more kind-hearted among the doctors took a strict line about complaints. They, for example, tried to persuade me not to appeal to the head doctor or the prison commandant on behalf of the ill-treated inmates. They tried in vain, of course, and when they then got orders to hush up these cases of brutal treatment, they invariably obeyed. As for me, I was constantly being transferred from one department to another because I kept drawing attention to what went on.

Appeals to world public opinion

Volodya Borisov was one of the finest men I have ever met, always ready to help anybody who needed help. He didn't know the meaning of the word 'fear', and never once did I see him give way to despair.

He had been arrested because, as a member of the 'Initiative Group' in Moscow, he had signed the well-known letter about the arrest of General Grigorenko and Gabai for their defence of the Crimean Tartars. Volodya was the only member of the group to come from Leningrad, and he was therefore put in the Third Civil Mental Hospital, just as I was. He tried to escape, his case then went to court and the commission declared him a madman, so that he was sentenced to compulsory psychiatric treatment at the Arsenal'naya Prison Mental Hospital. He and I sent a letter to the United Nations. Then we were separated and had some difficulty in composing and smuggling

out a second letter, which was finally sent with my signature, though we had drafted it together. That was in the summer of 1970. Early the following year we smuggled out another appeal to world public opinion and began a hunger strike that lasted some 82 days, I think. We wanted to draw attention to the new methods of sterilising the human mind by administering drugs direct to the brain. We also wanted to expose those senseless and illegal institutions, the mental prison hospitals, where it is impossible to treat sick people properly, and to help the victims in these hospitals by giving as many names and as much information as we could about what went on there. And of course we wanted to help the sane people in both the prison and civil mental institutions, in which political prisoners are deprived even of those few rights which those in ordinary prisons and concentration camps have.

Following appeals by Academician Sakharov and other people, and in particular following Bukovsky's interviews, a big campaign was launched in the West on our behalf. The administration of the prison mental hospitals was ordered to put an end to our hunger strike at all costs. They first tried all the usual devices: they invited our relatives to urge us to stop, then they promised to release us, and when that failed, isolated us completely; then they put us in the same cell again for two days before separating us anew. But it was all in vain and the campaign was escalating. They finally capitulated and allowed Volodya's lawyer to come and visit us. He became my lawyer too. All our other demands were likewise met. One of them, however, was modified: we had asked to be declared sane and taken to court. This was not acceded to on the pretext that we were too weak to appear in court, so our case was again heard in our absence. The court named a new commission, but at least our lawyer was to take part in setting it up. An end was put to Volodya's 'treatment', and all the other sane people in the Arsenal'naya hospital had theirs stopped as well.

Blackmail

Following the hunger strike, Volodya and I were reunited in one cell and the authorities did everything we asked because they were afraid we would otherwise resume our action. But just then the International Congress of Psychiatrists met in Mexico City. Academician Snezhnevsky blackmailed the Congress by his threat that the Soviet delegation would walk out if there were any discussion of Soviet psychiatric practices, and the Executive Committee, headed by Dr Dennis Leigh, ruled that there was to be no such discussion. This had an immediate effect on us. A huge new wave of repression began, and the many prisoners who were about to be released, stayed on. Nobody was released. The authorities then began to violate the conditions under which our hunger strike had been called off. They even started giving Volodya

Borisov injections again, and so we had to go on another hunger strike, which produced a new wave of protests in the West. Under this pressure they sent us to the Serbsky Institute for re-examination. Here, Volodya and I were again separated, as he was in the criminal wing of the Lunts Department while I was in the same wing as on my first confinement there in 1968, with the political prisoners and other people in the charge of the KGB. Most of them political.

After a month we went before a commission. The doctors stressed they weren't interested in my political views. This is interesting, because the first condition for the release of a political prisoner is that he renounce his beliefs, agree that he is mad and thank the doctors for his 'treatment'. But after our letters and Bukovsky's activities, they were afraid and so, during this commission in the winter of 1972, they said they were not interested in my opinions but only wanted to know what I would do once I was released. Would I carry on with my social activities or not. By this time our hunger strike, which had lasted two months, had ended on the advice of our friends in Moscow, who told us that the strike was now playing into the hands of the authorities, who used our weak physical condition as a pretext for the postponement of the commission.

When they asked me about my future activities, I told them I intended to go on as before, and so they couldn't release me. But the pressure from abroad was so strong that they called another commission a week or so later and, in spite of my statement, decided to transfer both Volodya and me to a civil mental hospital. This was a decisive step. It is much more difficult to get transferred from a prison hospital to a civil one than to get released from the latter.

Deportations

Once the campaign for our release was over because people thought everything was now all right, we were sent back to the Arsenal'naya Prison Mental Hospital to await the court decision. They again separated us and put us in solitary confinement. And the court decision was that the Serbsky Institute commission had no right to release us, this being the prerogative of the special commission which visits the prison mental hospitals. Yet this commission consisted of exactly the same people, all of them leading members of Soviet psychiatry!

Fearing a new hunger strike, however, they added a rider that the decision of the Serbsky commission would be taken into account by the Leningrad commission. But before this had met, a new wave of repression was instituted throughout the Soviet penal system. It was at this time that the Mordovian concentration camps were transferred to the Perm region and all prisoners in the Arsenal'naya were to be sent to provincial prison mental hospitals such as Dnepropetrovsk, Sych-

is, because I was ill and they were afraid of renewed protests from the West. So they decided to leave me there and to try and break me.

This transfer was a great tragedy because just before the Congress in Mexico most of these people were about to be released. For instance, Anatoly Chinnov, a young chemist from Leningrad, had been promised by his doctor that, as his maximum term under Article 83 of the Penal Code for attempting to cross the frontier illegally had ended, she would recommend his release. But after the Congress he was not released and was now sent to the Dnepropetrovsk Prison Mental Hospital where he had been before and where they had tortured him with electric shocks and insulin 'therapy'. He is still there. This man, whom I remember without a single grey hair on his head now has half his hair white and has lost half his teeth. He is also physically in a very bad way. When his relatives asked the head doctor what his illness was and why he was considered to be mad, she replied that he believed in God and how could a normal man hold such beliefs? So they want him to renounce his religious beliefs. His refusal to do so is the only thing that prevents his release.

When I learned about the deportation of half the sane population of the Arsenal'naya I was very concerned, for I knew that many of them were physically ill and that conditions in our hospital were much better than in the provincial prisons, thanks to the attention we had managed to arouse on the part of world opinion. I realised that this was a new policy of annihilation and I feared for Anatoly Chinnov because he was so weak physically. I also feared for the writer Boris Dmitrievich Yevdokimov, who was very sick and was also sent to the Dnepropetrovsk Prison Mental Hospital, where he remains without any prospect of release to this day.

I managed to smuggle out another letter to the UN General Secretary, Dr Kurt Waldheim, and began another hunger strike, demanding that the deportation of political prisoners be stopped. Volodya Borisov did not know about my action because he was in another block and I did my best to keep it from him, fearing that if he took part he would not be released. The authorities tried to bargain with me by promising to leave me and Borisov behind when the others were deported, but I stuck to my demands and eighteen days later, after my letter was published in the West, they gave in. None of the prisoners left in the Arsenal'naya was to be deported. This is an interesting example of how the campaigns in the West were reflected in the behaviour of the Soviet authorities.

'Choose your own treatment'

On 1 December 1972 a new commission took place. Volodya Borisov and I had received invitations to go to Israel and the head doctor at the hospital, Captain Zemskov, told my wife¹

'The truth is never hostile. It can only be pleasant or unpleasant.'

Dr Barovich, Mihajlov's lawyer, answering the charge that his client conducted 'hostile propaganda' against Yugoslavia, in court at Novi Sad, 27 February 1975.

that my desire to go to Israel was a proof of my madness. The commission, however, decided to release me. The doctors were afraid that if I were not released I would again go on hunger strike and, being ill and weak, I might not survive, for during my previous hunger strike I had twice been on the verge of death. If I died, they would have been in a very uncomfortable position in view of the campaign in the West. That is why they decided to let me go.

However, as I learned from a reliable source, the KGB were very angry and told the doctors that people like Borisov and I could not possibly be freed without agreeing to give up our activities. But the doctors' argument about my possible death in a hunger strike carried weight and they decided to release me, though not Volodya, in whose department there had not been a commission.

I was transferred to the Fifth Civil Mental Hospital and on my first day there was summoned before the doctors. They said they had no wish to hold people like me and would do their best to release me. I was to go before yet another commission, but if that were to recommend my release, they had to show that there had been an improvement in my condition. To prove this they had to state that I had had a course of treatment. They then asked me to choose my own treatment, offering to prescribe any drugs I liked. They even offered to throw away the drugs as long as it could be said that I had had treatment. I refused all these offers and they complained to my wife that I was 'too rigid' and that I would not be released if I persisted. My wife asked them: 'Are you informed about my husband's case?' They said not in detail but that they had a good idea about it, and

¹ Fainberg's first wife, who divorced him before his release. He has since married Marina Voikhan-skaya, a doctor he met during his incarceration, who helped him and other political prisoners and who has, since this interview was recorded, joined him in England.

she told them: 'How could you make such suggestions to him if you knew about his case and his attitude? He can't be bent, he can only be killed. If you want to bury him here, go on making such suggestions.' The head doctor asked her what they were to do then and my wife replied: 'If you want to get rid of him, you must not be rigid.'

This conversation was very important for me because after that day they did not ask me anything and did their best to get rid of me. I spent some eight months in the hospital and then, just before the International Psychiatric Symposium was due to meet in Tbilisi, the order came for me to be released. Unexpectedly I received a visit

from the Leningrad Chief Psychiatrist, Dr Belayev, who again asked me what I intended doing after my release. But before I could say anything in reply, he interrupted by saying: 'I know all about your ideas and your friends, but I am not asking you what you will do in the social sphere. That doesn't interest me - I am a psychiatrist. I am only asking about your job, just questions concerned with the material side of your life.' It was obvious from this that he had been ordered to prepare my release.

I was freed on 11 November. And it is an irony that the question of political prisoners in mental institutions was not even discussed at the International Symposium in Tbilisi.

How psychiatry is used as a political weapon CPYRGHT

The Soviet Union's hospitals of fear

In most countries of the world doctors put the interests of their patients above the state, preserve confidentiality and generally work independently of government bodies. However, since all institutions are subservient to the totalitarian nature of the Soviet Union, medicine, especially psychiatric medicine, has become more and more available as a political weapon. The psychiatric record of a person can be examined at will by government officials and various institutions and can prevent someone successfully applying for a new job, a holiday abroad, and so on. It is small wonder, therefore, that the mental hospital in the Soviet Union is feared for the power it wields, persecuting individuals who are obviously sane but a nuisance to the state.

In the Soviet Union there are two kinds of mental hospital: The special (prison) mental hospital of which there are about 12, run on military lines, and the ordinary mental hospital. In the special mental hospital, the criminally insane are interned along with those dissidents considered extremely dangerous by the state.

The advantages of committing a political dissident to a psychiatric hospital are manifold. The publicity from a political case in open court can cause the state much embarrassment which it can eschew if the sanity of the accused is questioned by a psychiatric report; if the accused is declared unfit to stand trial—and he is not legally entitled to be informed that he has been psychiatrically examined or what the results of the tests are—then most of the fundamental human rights he would have enjoyed in ordinary criminal proceedings are lost. He may not be informed when his hearing is to take place, so

may be unable to defend himself when the court is ruling on his mental fitness. It is not even incumbent on the authorities to inform him of any new charges against him. These hearings are often held in camera, and only afterwards might a sane man find he has been judged insane and committed for special "treatment" which can last indefinitely.

In 1961 a new set of regulations was approved in the Soviet Union; these dealt with the emergency hospital treatment of mentally ill people who are a public danger. The regulations included many dangerously ambiguous clauses, for example: "Hypochondriac delusional condition, causing an irregular, aggressive attitude in the patient towards individuals, organizations or institutions." So it would seem that someone who criticized an institution could find this being used to prove him mentally unbalanced.

The symptoms of scientist Zhores Medvedev's "illness" were described as "split personality, expressed in the need to combine scientific work in the field with publicist activities, an overestimation of his own personality, poor adaptation to the social environment" and so on. Gennady Shimaiov, a Christian, was told in 1969: "Everything that you just told us confirms us in the view that illness lies at the root of your 'conversion' (to Christianity)". Roy Medvedev (historian and brother of Zhores Medvedev) found in several psychiatric "special expert diagnoses" such symptoms of "psychiatric illness" as "considers the entry of Soviet troops into Czechoslovakia to have been aggression" and "truth-seeking".

Marina Voikhanskaya is the first psychiatrist to leave the Soviet Union and talk openly in the West about her experiences in Soviet mental hospitals. She says: "I first heard of dissidents being treated in mental hospitals on the BBC World Service and then I read about it in *samizdat* but I could not believe it for a moment and dismissed it as hostile, anti-Soviet propaganda." Later she came across several people who started to make her rethink her views about the harmless nature of psychiatry in her country. In 1970 a woman patient was referred to her hospital. She was Mrs Kondakova, a lawyer, who had been married to the director of several factories in Leningrad, besides being of high standing in the local Party. Mrs Kondakova was accustomed to criticizing local legal corruption and did this freely whilst her husband was still alive, since his position shielded her. One day, after his death, she went to the post office where she sent a long telegram to Brezhnev about this corruption. Hardly had she left the post office after mailing the telegram, when she was picked up and sent to Psychiatric Hospital No 3, where Marine Voikhanskaya helped to get her discharged.

Then Marina Voikhanskaya became acquainted with Yuri Ivanov when he was transferred to her hospital. "He was a painter," said Marina, "who had been imprisoned since 1955 because he had been discovered smuggling his pictures abroad, so he was accused of spreading bourgeois art. After spending 15 years in a concentration camp he was sent to Hospital No 3, in a special department for very disturbed patients. Belayev, the

head psychiatrist in Leningrad had him put there without even examining him, and had him diagnosed as schizophrenic." Marina Voikhanskaya was not even allowed to see Ivanov's case history, and was cautioned not to become involved; later Dr Tobok, the head of her department, forbade her to visit Ivanov. After he had spent one year and ten months in mental hospital Ivanov was given a certificate saying that this period had been used for medical investigation. Diagnosis: Sane.

According to Marina Voikhanskaya, other psychiatrists in Soviet mental hospitals either do not realize they are treating sane men or are too frightened or too indifferent to object. In Semyon Glyzman from Kiev the only other Soviet psychiatrist to protest against using drugs on the sane, was sentenced to a long term imprisonment in a labor camp, where he is interned today. Marina Voikhanskaya was intimidated and transferred to a geriatric unit where she was involved in the case of Victor Fainberg. She met Fainberg in Leningrad during his brief period of freedom between Leningrad Special Prison Hospital and Psychiatric Hospital No 3. He threatened to commit suicide rather than submit to drug treatment, and only Marina Voikhanskaya's intervention saved his life. Fainberg was later released as a result of pressure on the authorities by Western public opinion, including Amnesty International, who were aided by Academician Sakharov and others. From the West, she started a publicity campaign which resulted in a one-way visa for Marina Voikhanskaya. She wrote her letters from Israel which were specifically aimed at the KGB whom,

knew, would read the letters. "I will create such a stink in the world press until Marina is released", he told me, "that the campaign for the Panovs will seem like a tea-party in comparison". Now he is married to Marina Voikhanskaya and they are agitating, in England, for Soviet authorities to allow Marina's nine-year-old son, Misha, to leave the country.

Victor Fainberg is one of the very few lucky ones—he is free and has retained his sanity. But what of Semyon Gluzman? And Vladimir Bukovsky, who collected information on the abuse of psychiatry and made it available to Western journalists? He collaborated on a remarkable document with Gluzman, a *Manual of Psychiatry for Polit-*

ical Dissidents (published by Amnesty International in London); recently smuggled to the West, it contains advice for those who find themselves faced with forced psychiatric detention. Now Bukovsky himself is seriously ill in Vladimir prison.

In November, 1973, the Royal College of Psychiatrists passed a resolution condemning the use of psychiatry on political dissidents; now they will doubtlessly be considering what further action to take. Now is the time for psychiatrists outside the Soviet Union to raise their voices in protest, if they are truly to call themselves doctors.

Valerie Kaye

Bernard Levin

CPYRGHT

Will British psychiatrists take action against the torturers of the Soviet Union?

Any Soviet psychiatrist who misuses his professional skill for the political purposes of the State has placed himself beyond the pale of professional acceptability

Daily and hourly my physical body and my personality are being killed. The dog outside the fence gets better food, with more calories, than I do. It is not fed rotten cabbage and stinking fish. My head is shaved, I am always hungry, and I freeze on the cement floor of the punishment cells. At any moment I may be stripped naked. I am a slave. Any sadist has the authority and right to force me to do any humiliating labour.

Those words were written by Dr Semyon Gluzman, the young Soviet psychiatrist sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in a concentration-camp for disseminating an exposure of the fraudulent psychiatric diagnosis used to incarcerate the dissident General Grigorenko; Dr Gluzman's message was smuggled out of his camp a few months ago, and has since reached the West. It is another testimony to the increasing reversion on the part of the Soviet authorities to the use of torture and brutality on a Stalinist and Nazi pattern in their attempt to destroy the dissident movement altogether. And I publish it now not because it tells us anything that we did not already know in general, but for a particular and practical purpose. In her valuable article on this

page last week, Valerie Kaye gave an account of the background to the use of bogus psychiatric diagnosis and "treatment" used by the Soviet authorities against dissidents whom it would be embarrassing simply to imprison or murder. She ended by saying: "Now is the time for psychiatrists outside the Soviet Union to raise their voices in protest, if they are truly to call themselves doctors."

Now the Royal College of Psychiatrists is due to meet next week, and various aspects of the Soviet abuse of their profession are to be raised. I understand that those British psychiatrists who are determined to get their colleagues to make a stand are proposing action at the meeting in October; next week, however, should make clear whether when it comes to the point British psychiatrists as a body are going yet again to allow those who peddle the don't-offend-the-Russians line to block or divert the pressure for action. The international symposium which met in Geneva in April defined the psychiatrist's duty to his patient in terms which left no doubt that it is being systematically betrayed in the Soviet Union; the participants also moved to set up an organization which would take up cases of such betrayal, and apply the sanction of boycott against countries, and individual doctors, who permit, institute or practise it. It is hoped that at their October meeting British psychiatrists will be obliged to decide,

one way or another in such a movement; it remains to be seen, next week, which way they are likely to decide. And if they refuse action, then, in Miss Kaye's words, they will indeed have shown that they have forfeited the right "truly to call themselves doctors".

For if they will now ask themselves whether they would have been willing to associate in fraternal harmony with those debased physicians who practised pseudo-medical abominations on the victims in Hitler's concentration camps, and if, as we may surely assume, the answer is that they would not, then they must ask themselves why, in that case, they are willing to shake the hands of such "doctors" as Snezhnevsky, Vartanian and the sadist Daniil Lunts. Members of the Royal College have got to face the truth, which is that any Soviet psychiatrist who misuses his professional skill for the political purposes of the State has by doing so placed himself outside the pale of professional acceptability elsewhere. They have a duty to support those who suffer against those who, from whatever motives, prostitute their calling in the service of those who cause the suffering. We all have such a duty; but the Royal College of Psychiatrists has an extra duty, and a greater opportunity.

The extra duty is too obvious to need discussion; the extra opportunity is less so. There has never been any doubt, and Victor Fainberg has emphasized this in the testimony he brought with him when he got out, that by far the most effective form of pressure it is possible to bring to bear on the Soviet authorities is that which comes from professional and other international bodies with whom they wish to retain contacts. There was an immediate and substantial intensification of Soviet ill-treatment of dissidents incarcerated in psychiatric "hospitals" after the notorious Mexico City meeting of the World Psychiatric Association where its general secretary, Dr Denis Leigh, had helped to block any attempt to condemn the Soviet abuse of psychiatry. With the threat of professional condemnation, and the consequent possibility of exclusion of Soviet psychiatrists from international association, lifted, the Soviet authorities felt free to give the screw another turn, and this has been a constant pattern; when the tide of international protest, especially from specialist organizations, is flowing strongly, the oppressors retreat; when the tide recedes, they advance. (Even more significant, perhaps, was the fact that immediately before the Mexico fiasco, the torment of the incarcerated dissidents was eased, and stories were put about by the Soviet authorities to the effect that they would soon be released, so anxious were they to avoid international condemnation.)

The Royal College of Psychiatrists, and its president, Sir Martin Roth (who hands over to his successor next week), has in the past been, in this matter, far too weak and dilatory, but when Sir Martin did send a telegram, along with four other distinguished doctors, protesting against the abominable torment being visited upon the seriously ill Vladimir Bukovsky (the bravest of the brave, whose offence had been to help to alert the outside world to the abuse of psychiatry in

the Soviet Union), Bukovsky was immediately allowed a period of special diet and respite from slave labour. (Sir Martin retires from the presidency of the Royal College during next week's meeting, relieved of the cares and pressures of office he will perhaps be more active in this field than hitherto. He is succeeded by Dr Linford Rees, a choice which on the face of it bodes ill, for Dr Rees has not only been closely associated with Dr Leigh but actually made the appalling and inexplicable blunder of accepting, along with Dr Leigh, honorary membership of the Soviet Psychiatrists Association, and went along to the Soviet Embassy in London to be invested while his Soviet confreres were daily defiling their, and his, calling. But since he must now realize what an error of judgment he has made, it may be that he will now be anxious to use his new and influential position to help the Soviet victims.)

Now, however, matters have gone beyond the stage at which western psychiatrists can quieten their consciences by making gestures. British psychiatrists as a body have got to realize that, if they are to retain any collective honour, they must give up entirely an increasingly disgraceful association with a body that has shown itself to have nothing in common with its western counterparts but the name of psychiatrist. It is no use their passing resolutions condemning Soviet abuse of psychiatry even in the most forthright terms, if they are not prepared to act on their implications—if, that is, they are not prepared to break off all contact with Soviet psychiatrists until this wickedness is ended.

Some of them may think I go too far with words like "wickedness"; I must therefore end today by thrusting the reality behind the word into their

faces. The distinguished mathematician Leonid Plyushch was sentenced to an indefinite term when he was diagnosed insane for signing an appeal to the UN for human rights in his country, and for being in possession of *sanizdat* literature. He is held in a "hospital" in Dnepropetrovsk, where the commandant is a man called Pruss; the spurious diagnostic commission which recommended that Plyushch be thus detained was chaired by Snezhnevsky. Leonid Plyushch, who is perfectly sane, is being, quite literally, tortured to death. Day after day he is injected with large doses of depressant drugs which are destroying him. His wife, after being permitted a visit to him recently, wrote this, in an appeal to the outside world:

The Leonid Plyushch known to me, to his children, relatives and friends, this Leonid Plyushch no longer exists. What exists is an exhausted man, driven to the last brink of suffering, losing his memory and his ability to read, write and think, and terribly ill. And those who with their own hands are killing him, know about it, know they are committing a crime. They know it and they do it. I did everything to prove his normality, his mental healthiness. A foolish enterprise: after all, those who were punishing him by calling him mad know no less than I that he was mentally healthy. But now I say: yes, he is ill. Terribly ill, and he needs to be saved from worse than illness, from death. . . . Let me be given back my husband, ill as they have made him, and let us then be allowed to leave this country.

That is what Soviet psychiatry lends itself to, and the Royal College of Psychiatrists is to be invited to take a stand—and a potentially effective stand—against such evil. I do not see how it can now refuse to do so.

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Russia asked to free rebel psychiatrist

By CLARE DOWER

A TELEGRAM urging Russia to release the psychiatrist Dr Semyon Gluzman was sent by the Royal College of Psychiatrists from its annual meeting in London yesterday.

The telegram was addressed to Prof. Andrei Snezhnevsky, head of the Institute of Psychiatry in Moscow. The unanimous vote to send it followed a half-hour debate on the misuse of psychiatry in Russia during which it was repeatedly asserted that sane people who annoy the Russian authorities are detained on psychiatric grounds and often given massive drug overdoses. The issue was debated at the request of the Royal College public policy committee which has been collecting information.

Russians angry
Dr Gluzman is co-author of a handbook on psychiatry for dissidents which has infuriated

the Russian authorities; it is packed with advice on how to respond to interrogation by psychiatrists.

The other co-author is the biophysicist Vladimir Bukovsky, who is very ill and is serving 12 years for feeding information on political abuses of psychiatry to Western journalists.

It was the first documented information of its kind to reach the West, in 1971. Yesterday's meeting asked that Prof. W. Linford Rees, the new president, should make "active representation" to try to secure the release of Gluzman, Bukovsky and Leonid Plyushch, held in a mental prison hospital.

A second telegram, to the Kremlin, threatening to "sever connections" with Russian psychiatrists unless dissidents are released, was being circulated for signature. First signatory was Prof. Henry Dicks, of the Royal College, known for his interviews with German war criminals and his study of licensed mass murder.